

# ***Massachusetts Health Care Quality and Cost Council***

## **Fiscal Year 2008 Accomplishments**

### **Consumer Friendly Health Information Website**

- The Council will launch a consumer friendly health information website in June promoting cost-efficiency by providing comparative cost information that will allow consumers to compare health care procedures at different hospitals and outpatient facilities.
- The Council approved principles for selecting quality and cost measures to be reported on the consumer friendly website as well as an initial set of quality and cost measures to be posted on the website.
- The Council is coordinating the work of all vendors and parties to ensure the accuracy, validity and timeliness of all data to be included on the website.

### **Fiscal Year 2008 Goals and Strategies**

- The Council adopted six health care quality improvement goals that are intended to lower or contain the growth in health care costs while improving quality and reducing racial and ethnic health disparities.
- The Council specifically outlined steps to identify methods to control health care costs including, but not limited to pursuing the following strategies:
  - Analyzing the causes of increases or decreases in health care costs;
  - Adopting a standard measurement of total annual Massachusetts health care spending (the “Massachusetts Global Health Cost Indicator”);
  - Developing legislative and regulatory recommendations to control health care costs, considering a wide range of health care clinical, service delivery, payment, technology, administrative, and legal opportunities; and
  - Preparing reports comparing variations in rates paid by insured health plans, self-insured entities, Medicaid, Medicare, uninsured persons and other payers to health care providers in the Commonwealth.
- The Council developed strategies to achieve quality and cost goals in the areas of Patient Safety, Chronic Care, End of Life Care, Disparities in Health Care and Promoting Quality Improvement through Transparency including but not limited to:
  - Public reporting and elimination of Hospital Acquired Infections and Serious Reportable Events;
  - Developing whole system Hospital Mortality Measure;
  - Developing blueprint for implementing a statewide model system of care that improves the health status of people with, or at risk for, chronic conditions;
  - Implementing a process for communicating patients’ wishes for care at the end of life;
  - Increasing the availability and use of hospice and palliative care programs;
  - Adopting and displaying on the website comparative measures of quality and cost information;
  - Ensuring that each of these initiatives includes targeted programs to reduce racial and ethnic disparities; and
  - Establishing performance benchmarks to measure progress toward meeting these goals.

### **Additional Council Accomplishments**

- The Council held its Annual Meeting in August 2007, convening 170 policy-makers, health care providers, third party payers, employers and consumers to discuss goals and strategies.
- The Council will file its first Annual Report in March 2008 with the joint committee on health care financing and the clerks of the house and senate on its progress in achieving the goals of improving quality and containing or reducing health care costs.
- The Council continues to work closely with the Advisory Board, state agencies and other relevant parties on the execution, implementation, and further development of goals and strategies.